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Annotated Bibliography: Children of Divorce and Academic Success

Barret, Robert L., and Bryan E. Robinson. “Children of Gay Fathers.” In *Redefining Families: Implications for Children’s Development*, Plenum Press, New York. (1994); ed. Adele Eskeles Gottfried and Allen W. Gottfried, 162-70. Rpt. in Writing in the Disciplines: A Reader and Rhetoric for Academic Writers, 6th ed. Ed. Mary Lynch Kennedy and William J.Kennedy. Boston; Pearson 2009. 409-14. Print.

Robert Barret and Bryan Robinson, authors of “Children of Gay Fathers” have both written extensively over variations in the family norms and Barret is a gay father himself. The authors begin the article by explaining that all children are different and many children of gay fathers are also children of divorce. They speak about the need many gay fathers have about coming out to their children and how some remain closeted. They also describe how some of the children react to their father’s sexual orientation including a case study of a boy named Chip. They conclude by comparing their research to other studies that have directly studied the link between gay fathers and divorce of two opposite gendered parents.

Barret and Robinson are very open with their audience and guide them through their research smoothly as opposed to other harsher objective articles. This article is not objective in the fact that one of the author’s is a gay father which creates bias towards the subject being studied. Barret and Robinson do bring a case study to the table which shows the effects of having a gay father without the effects of divorce.

The article does serve a purpose towards the research question in the fact that it acknowledges children of gay fathers come from divorced homes most of the time. The research also points out how children feel internally and how they act externally which can directly affect their academic success. The only reason not to use this article for the research would be that it does not directly study academic success of children of divorce.

Blank, Rebecca M. “Absent Fathers: Why Don’t We Ever Talk About the Unmarried Men?” *It Takes a Nation: A New Agenda for Fighting Poverty*. Princeton University Press. (1997); 42-47. Rpt. in Writing in the Disciplines: A Reader and Rhetoric for Academic Writers, 6th ed. Ed. Mary Lynch Kennedy and William J.Kennedy. Boston; Pearson 2009. 439- 44. Print.

Rebecca Blank’s “Absent Fathers” focuses on the fathers who do not live with their children or offer substantial child support for their offspring’s well-being. She begins by explaining that absent fathers are practically invisible to the government; the only thing that makes the population see them is the lack of child support payments. She points out that most men who abandon their children are rated among the poorest in the nation. With this statement she brings her focus into how much poor fathers do or do not provide child support for their children. She states that poor fathers who do pay child support do not tend to pay the full amount, but partial payments instead. They also tend to pay under the table versus through the government. She counteracts her own statement by saying that even the little amount that fathers do pay to the mothers and children help with the single mother’s income. She concludes this by saying that while some fathers are not in the picture, readers must remember those that do stay with their children.

Blank’s major claim is that absent fathers are not seen in the public eye and do not support their offspring as they should. She backs up her claim with a significant amount of data, but she does tend to stray off to speaking about single mothers. It is obvious that Blank is passionate about her research because she believes even a little amount of money from the father will go a long way towards the child’s well-being. She does recognize that while some fathers are absent, most do stay with their families and support them in the way they should. She assumes that readers understand the concept of child support, and aims her major thesis towards the actual absent fathers.

“Absent Fathers” unfortunately would not support the research question very well because of its focus. The article centers itself around the missing fathers and how their absence affects their children economically. There is no data in the article that shows how children’s academics are affected by their missing fathers. Though this article does give insight into how children are affected economically by the divorce or absence of one of their parents, it does not help the research.

Buchmann, Claudia, and Thomas A. DiPrete. "The Growing Female Advantage in College Completion: The Role of Family Background and Academic Achievement." American Sociological Review 71.4 (2006): 515-41. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

Buchmann and DePiete’s article focuses on the increasing rate of college completion in the female gender. The time frame that the authors focus on is from the time that women’s college graduate rates were lower, to when they were equal, and finally to when they surpassed men. They analyze family background, as well as gender differences in the article. Their conclusion becomes that it is a mixture of effects that causes women to graduate more than men from college.

The article pulls in many different audiences including: both males and females, usually of the college level, and parents who wish for their children to do better in school. Their main argument is that women are increasingly outcompeting the opposite gender for college degrees and therefore jobs. The authors pull from many different resources and use a variety of figures to prove that women have higher completion rates in college. They use one of their past papers to prove that the absence of a father affects a son’s academic achievement in high school and college. The text anticipates many different causes for the growth in women’s number of college degrees, and views it from many different angles.

This particular article provides ample support for the research question as it discusses the effects a parents attendance or absence has on their children’s performance in middle and high school. The research shows that the absence of a father and the increasing view of the mother being the breadwinner in the home, decreases boys academic success while increasing a daughter’s achievement. This research provides a broad perspective on how the parents directly affect how well their children compete in grade school and throughout college courses.

Cherlin, Andrew J., Lindsay Chase P, and Christine McRae. "Effects of Parental Divorce on Mental Health Throughout the Life Course." American Sociological Review 63.2 (1998): 239-49. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

This article over mental health follows children from birth to age thirty-three. It defines mental health as the amount of good or bad emotional behavior that the subject has. It takes into account when the child’s parents divorced and how this affected them into their twenties and on to their early thirties. The authors interview the children’s teachers as well as their parents on their academic and emotional behavior. They conclude that many factors affect a child’s behavior throughout their life and prove this with many figures and charts.

The figures they use show defined objectives in their research and that they pull from many other academic resources. Their main point seems to be that not only are children affected mentally by their parent’s divorce, but also academically and emotionally. They provide ample support for their research by pulling from other academic sources on the subject. The authors provide many different viewpoints such as: the age of the child at the divorce, gender, and the absence of one parent or another. The different causes of degraded mental health show that the authors are being both objective and scientific in their findings. The only consequence of the article is that children of divorce might see themselves as having mental problems from reading this article and believing everything in the article is a complete fact.

This article supports the research question well by taking into account many different factors in a child’s academic success, which includes their mental health. How well a child is feeling mentally or emotionally directly effects how they do on tests. The research also includes results of the children’s standardized math and reading tests which will be used in the research of divorce and the child’s academic success or failure. It also takes into when a child’s parents get divorced and how this affects their middle and high school grades.

Eldar-Avidan, Dorit, Muhammad Haj-Yahia, and Charles W. Greenbaum. "Money Matters: Young Adults' Perception of the Economic Consequences of their Parents' Divorce." Journal of Family and Economic Issues 29.1 (2008): 74-85. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

“Money Matters: Young Adults’ Perception of the Economic Consequences of their Parents’ Divorce” focuses on the effects that twenty-two Israel children had from their parents’ divorce as a child (under eighteen years of age). It views their reactions to emotional and economic problems as well as the feelings they have toward their parents. The researchers also focus on their three defined adjustments to divorce: resilience, survival, and vulnerability. Their three statuses of adjustments are used to view how well the children adjusted to life after they entered adulthood. The studies were conducted with young adults between the ages of twenty and twenty-five.

The researchers pull from many other studies that prove their main point that children of divorce view money differently than children whose parents are not spilt. They follow the evidence logically by including direct quotes from the experiment subjects. These also help prove that their inferences are justifiable because the children directly stated that they felt differently about how money works. A consequence of the author’s argument is that children of divorce that are well off in their economic wealth may skew their findings. Not all children react the same to a divorce. They should explore a different culture outside the Jewish culture and perhaps do a study using American society.

While this research is very extensive, it is not directly applicable to the proposed research question because it does not focus on how the data affects the academic success of children of divorce; however, it is becoming apparent that economic decline can affect a child’s academic success. It does include that children are sometimes funded through one of their parents to make it through college. This does show that children of divorce can make it to the college level of academics, and can be used in research.

Galston, William A. "Divorce American Style." Public Interest.124 (1996): 12-. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

“Divorce American Style” centers around how divorce has changed over time and the ways couples have gone about with separation. It opens up with a background story explaining how divorce changed with the growing independence of women. The article brings up the two ways that divorce has occurred in the past few decades: highly restrictive and low restrictions. Galston also points out that the victims of the divorce are most children, whose high school completion, school performance, college graduation, along with many depressive and mental disorders. Galston then proposes a reform for the legal system of divorce contrasting and comparing his ideas with other scholars. He states his three principles of divorce reform and then stresses that the children must be taken into consideration during a divorce.

Galston’s main point is that divorce has changed in America over time and it still has room for improvement. He provides counter arguments for his own statements on divorce reform from other academic scholars and then applies a different point of view to those arguments. The points that he tries to make important are the fact that children are affected negatively by divorce and that divorce still needs to be changed due to the lack of good it has done society in the past few decades. He backs up each of the points with complete support and aims his arguments towards parents who are considering divorce and how they should go about the separation, or even if they should become divorced due to the age of their children.

This article gives many different supporting points to the research of academic success on children of divorce. It points out that children are clearly negatively affected by divorce which results in a decline in high school completion and school performance. This provides a single point of view that can be counteracted by a different point from another article. It will also help make the paper argumentative due to the strong opinion of the author on how divorce affects children throughout their academic career.

Jeynes, William H. "Effects of Remarriage Following Divorce on the Academic Achievement of Children." Journal of Youth and Adolescence 28.3 (1999): 385-93. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

William Jeynes begins his article by brings up a point that many scholars believe to be true, that children with step parents are better off academically than those who are children of divorce. Throughout his article he rips apart this theory with data and analysis. He provides methods, data, and discussion respectively to approach his argument against the idea he wishes to rebut. Using these techniques he pokes holes in the standing theory, and provides support for his own view point. He concludes with others opinions on the statement and brings his argument to a close.

The data Jeynes includes in his article provides support for his major claim that students in remarried homes do not excel in academics more than children of divorce and in single parent homes. The tables that he includes show that on standardized tests that both types of children do equally the same in academics. With data from other sources as well as his own Jeynes provides significant support for his thesis. The audience that Jeynes is trying to reach out to are those that believe that remarrying will benefit children academically. The author is also very objective on the subject and does not force his opinion on the reader but clearly states the results of the experiment.

“Effects of remarriage following divorce on the academic achievement of children” gives significant support for the argumentative research paper that will follow this bibliography. It provides contrasting research to an earlier article, and also compares children in a married home to those not in a married home and their equivalent test scores. Another reason that Jeynes article will be used for research is that it provides readable tables that compare academic grades and scores.

Jeynes, William H. "Examining the Effects of Parental Absence on the Academic Achievement of Adolescents: The Challenge of Controlling for Family Income." Journal of Family and Economic Issues 23.2 (2002): 189-210. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

Jeynes begins this article by speaking about the two different types of handling income after the divorce or loss of one parent: predissolution and postdissolution. He also points out that the researchers look at two different perspectives, family income perspective and parental absence perspective. These two views are used to see how the differences from a normal family affect the child’s academic achievement. The two perspectives begin to divide in how they believe their factors affect the child’s grades, whether declining or staying stable. The article keeps contrasting the two perspectives using their views on SES (sociological economic status), family income, and different situations.

Jeynes does very well using contradicting arguments to view subjects of a child’s academics differently. He pulls from many of the sources he uses in the article listed above and a few extra. The main point Jeynes tries to argue is that children’s academic success is negatively affected when parents separate or one of the guardians dies. He provides ample support for his argument, but also uses a variety of ways to view the reasons for decline in academics. The audience he is trying to reach are those who believe children’s academic success is not affected by changes in family structure and income. He argues very well, covering every inch of questionable ground and proves his point very clearly and precisely.

This particular article by Jeynes would support the research question because it directly links changes in the family structure to changes in a child’s academic success. Jeynes also gives a very clear opinion on how children are affected, which gives solid support for the negative side of the argument. The varying opinions from other researches throughout the article give additional proof and support to Jeynes thesis, and can contrast some of Jeynes’ own statements in the research paper.

Kim, Hyun Sik. "Consequences of Parental Divorce for Child Development." American Sociological Review 76.3 (2011): 487-511. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

The article opens with the discussion what the author is researching and why. She also compares many aspects of her study to ones that have already been conducted, and points out why her study is more in depth. She gives the three aspects that she will be studied under three different time frames. The time frames are pre-, in- and post-divorce, while the three measurements she is taking are interpersonal social skills, externalizing problem behaviors, and internalizing problem behaviors. She uses test scores to measure the rate of the first two and an assessment to measure the third. She then displays the results with a series of tables comparing children of divorce to children in intact homes. Her results show some negativity in children of divorce’s academic achievement.

Kim directly states that the hypothesis she wishes to test is when and how divorce affects a child and if any of this is reflected in their behavior. She tells the audience in depth about how she will conduct her research so no questions are left unanswered, and she brings in the thought that her research will cover more data than previous ones. She is very forward and direct, which gets her point across in a very objective manner, but makes the paper a bit of a snooze fest. She directs her article toward those wondering about divorce and the different effects on children before, during, and after the separation.

Kim’s research will benefit the study of the research question and will provide feedback to other sources. The two different aspects directly measured by test scores correlates very well with the research. Also, the research is displayed in a time frame that allows the reader to see when the child is affected by divorce and how. The author gives references to other articles that coincide with her results and may be used for further research.

Sigle-Rushton, Wendy, John Hobcraft, and Kathleen Kiernan. "Parental Divorce and Subsequent Disadvantage: A Cross-Cohort Comparison\*." Demography (pre-2011) 42.3 (2005): 427-46. ABI/INFORM Complete; ProQuest Research Library. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

Sigle-Ruston conducts his study “Parental divorce and subsequent disadvantage: A cross-cohort comparison” to discover if children are negatively affected by divorce over time. He uses children whose parents are together by their first follow up interview and then studies their lives over time using family disruption or divorce as a control variable to determine a child’s state of well-being. Sigle-Ruston presents the results with the two different control variables and points out the effects of both variables after the child has become an adult. His findings confirm his hypothesis and answer both of his research questions.

Sigle-Ruston through his study aims to discover whether predisruptive controls alter the way divorce effects people and the disadvantages across different groups or cohorts. He uses his research to also find out if the negative effects of divorce have declined over the years. The author takes on many variables and questions in his research but is able to organize them and present them easily. His audience becomes those who wish to know more about how divorce might affect children and how those effects have changed over time.

This article presents a number of reasons to which it would benefit the proposed research question. It gives many variables and provides results from each different one and shows cause and effect of divorce. The author also presents his findings in a way that is easy to understand and simple to incorporate in other research. Finally, the study focuses on how the children are affected which directly correlates to how well the child is fairing in academics.